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Message Text

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50
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 L-03 JUSE-00

PA-04 PRS-01 USIE-00 SAM-01 NSC-10 SS-20 PM-07 SY-10

INR-10 CIAE-00 DRC-01 RSC-01 /083 W
---------- 034349
O 011120Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 265
INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
NSA FORT MEADE MD IMMEDIATE
7TH RRFS RAMASUN STATION IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL UDORN IMMEDIATE
COMUSMACTHAI
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1797

SECDEF FOR OASD/PA

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD AND PAO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, TH
SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES PURSUIT OF ARMY SPECIALIST ON WATERGATE

REF: BANGKOK 1717

1. NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER JAMES CLARITY INFORMED US FEBRUARY 1 HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO RETURN TO UDORN AND MAKE FURTHER EFFORTS CATCH SSGT JOHN BURCH OFF STATION. CABLE FROM NEW YORK, WHICH HE SHOWED US, SAID WASHINGTON BUREAU HAD DEVELOPED LEAD THAT BURCH TOLD FRIEND NAMED TIMOTHY HOOPER THAT "HE MADE ALTERATIONS" (FYI BY IMPLICATION IN WATERGATE TAPES END FYI) APPARENTLY IN JULY 1973.

2. CLARITY TELLS US HE IS DUBIOUS IT WILL DO MUCH GOOD TO CHASE BURCH IN UDORN, IN LIGHT OF HIS PAST REFUSAL TO TALK.
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HE HAS ASKED PRESS ATTACHE AND CINCPAC LNO, "AS PROPER OFFICIAL

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CHANNEL," TO PROVIDE HIM WITH INFORMATION ON BURCH IN CASE OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS, WHICH HE SEEMS TO EXPECT WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS.

3. WE HAVE TOLD TIMESMAN:

A) IF HE WISHES TO POSE FURTHER QUESTIONS IN WRITING, QUESTIONS WILL BE FORWARDED TO BURCH FOR REPLY AT HIS DISCRETION; (REPORTER HAS SUBSEQUENTLY FURNISHED THE QUESTIONS LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 4);

B) WE ARE KEEPING WASHINGTON INFORMED OF TIMES'S INTEREST IN SERGEANT BURCH; AND,

C) WE HAVE NO REASON TO EXPECT ANY DEVELOPMENTS IN THAILAND AFFECTING SERGEANT BURCH, BUT IF HE SHOULD BE REASSIGNED FROM THAILAND, WE WOULD LET CLARITY KNOW.

4. CLARITY HAS FURNISHED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHICH WILL BE PASSED ON TO SERGEANT BURCH THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS:

1. ARE YOU ACQUAINTED, TO ANY DEGREE, WITH TIMOTHY HOOPER?

2. HAVE YOU EVER DISCUSSED THE WATERGATE SITUATION WITH HOOPER?

3. DID YOU TELL HOOPER THAT YOU HAD ALTERED THE PRESIDENTIAL WATERGATE TAPES OR ANY OTHER TAPES RELATED TO WATERGATE?

4. DID YOU TELL HOOPER THAT YOU KNEW WHO DID LATER OR TAMPER WITH THE TAPES?

5. EXACTLY WHAT DID YOU TELL HOOPER ABOUT WATERGATE?

6. WHEN AND WHERE HAVE YOU MET WITH HOOPER IN THE PAST TWO YEARS?

7. ARE YOU PREPARED TO DENY ANY STATEMENT HOOPER MIGHT MAKE THAT YOU TOLD HIM ABOUT THE ALTERING OR TAMPERING OF THE WATERGATE TAPES?
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8. ARE YOU PREPARED TO MAKE SUCH A DENIAL (OF ANY HOOPER WATERGATE ALLEGATION) UNDER OATH?

9. DO YOU WISH TO BE INTERVIEWED BY THE SPECIAL WATER-GATE PROSECUTOR, OR ANY OTHER OFFICIAL BODY, CONCERNING THE WATERGATE AFFAIR?

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5. WE ARE INFORMED BY SERGEANT BURCH'S COMMANDER THAT AN INVESTIGATOR FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE QUESTIONED THE SERGEANT LAST FALL ABOUT WATERGATE. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND RESULTS OF THAT QUESTIONING.

6. COMMENT: NEW YORK TIMES OBVIOUSLY THINKS IT HAS A HOT LEAD ON SENSATIONAL STORY LINKING US ARMY SERGEANT TO WATERGATE. CLARITY SEEMS TO BE PLAYING IT STRAIGHT WITH US IN BANGKOK, AND WE CONSIDER MINIMUM COOPERATION WORTHWHILE TO KEEP HIM AWAY FROM RAMASUN RADIO RESEARCH STATION.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, JOURNALISTS, MILITARY BASES, PRESS CONFERENCES, WATERGATE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO01797
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740263/aaaachdq.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BANGKOK 1717
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <09 JUL 2002 by kelleyw0, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <09 JUL 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES PURSUIT OF ARMY SPECIALIST ON WATERGATE
TAGS: MILI, TH, US, NEW YORK TIMES, (BURCH, JOHN), (CLARITY, JAMES), (LELYVELD, JOSEPH), (LALYVELD, JOSEPH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005